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could be thrown around the most subtle portrait taken during life.

On Monday evening, the 26th ult., an interesting Entertainment entitled "An evening with Shakespeare," was given at the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer Street; Mr. Charles E. Fry being the reader, assisted by Miss Bessie Emmett, Mr. Stedman, and a Glee party led by Mr. W. R. Young. Mr. Fry displayed a considerable amount of force and great variety of style in his various selections from the best known plays; his most successful efforts being the "Closet scene" in *Hamlet*, and a scene with Falstaff, from *Henry IV.* Miss Emmett and Mr. Stedman received a well deserved encore for their rendering of the duet "How sweet the moonlight sleeps," from Sullivan's *Kenilworth*. Mr. Albert Lowe presided at the pianoforte.

### Rebels.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

*Three Characteristic Duets, for the Pianoforte.*

- No. 1. *The little prattler.*
2. *Evening Thoughts.*
3. *The Boy's travels on his rocking-horse.*

Composed by I. Moscheles. (Op. 142.)

ANOTHER charming contribution to the many holiday pieces lately given by this composer for the pleasure and profit of those young pianists who have been trained to the belief that "Child's-play" in music, should be both merry and wise. In the beautiful series of duets recently published under the title of "Domestic life," we have sufficiently seen how trifles can be made so deeply interesting by the masterly manner in which they are treated that grown children glory in playing "Grandfather's dance;" and "Grandmother at her Spinning-wheel" is often illustrated by older fingers than those for whose gratification the piece was written. The compositions now before us, as their title implies, are evidently a continuation of the chain of thought embodied with so much success in "Domestic life;" and there can be no doubt that they will be received with an equal amount of favour. "The little prattler" carries out with the utmost felicity the intention of the composer. The *staccato* passages in semiquavers, asserting their right to be heard whenever a chance occurs, and only breaking off to be renewed at the first opportunity, so aptly represent the rattle of a child's tongue that we are delighted to find the "Secondo" (which we presume may represent the admiring parent) listening with pleasure to the little story, told in such breathless haste, occasionally nodding approval, with a sympathetic chord; and sometimes, even, lending a helping hand to cover the weak points, with true maternal fondness. "Evening Thoughts" commences with a melodious phrase for the "Secondo," intended as an "Ave Maria," as the words are written underneath: this is answered by the "Primo;" and a beautiful theme, beginning in thirds between the two players, is then carried on, with an effective syncopated bass, which is continued uninterruptedly until within two bars of the pause, which occurs at the end of the first page. The whole of this composition is the perfection of grace and elegance; and the writing in both parts is equally studied and effective; qualities too rarely to be found in pianoforte duets of the modern school. "The boy's travels on his rocking-horse" has a quaint—almost humorous—subject at the commencement, the restless character of which is preserved throughout the piece. Nothing can be more instinct with boyish glee than the galloping theme which describes the "travels"—nothing more musicianlike than the manner in which the phrases are woven in, and the passages distributed between the two players. Our brief remarks can but imperfectly set forth the many beauties contained in the composition under notice; but we trust that we have said enough to draw the attention both of teachers and performers to these sterling works by one of our greatest living composers.

*L'Oiseau au Forêt.* Pièce de Salon, pour Piano.  
*Berceuse*, pour Piano.

*Fleurs du Sud.* Impromptu, pour Piano.

*La Source.* Morceau Brillant, pour Piano.

*La Méditation.* Pièce descriptive, pour Piano.

*La Brise du Soir.* Morceau Brillant, pour Piano.

Composed by J. W. Harmston.

THE name of this composer is new to us; but we have faith in his power to become a popular writer of the class of compositions to which he seems to have devoted himself. We cannot say that he always succeeds in escaping from the conventional form into which most of our so-called "Drawing-room music" seems to shape itself; but in many of the pieces named above there is conclusive evidence of his earnest desire to write from himself, rather than from the works of others, however much these works may have helped to make the fortune both of their composers and publishers. "*L'Oiseau au Forêt*," as may be anticipated, is full of "twitterings;" but the piece has decided merit, apart from the bird's share in it; and the passages are written throughout with much elegance. We prefer, however, the "*Berceuse*," which is based on an extremely expressive subject, in A major; and is moreover tolerably easy to play. The passages of repetitions will be found useful as a study for young performers; and the phrases are sufficiently melodious to interest them. "*Fleurs du Sud*" is by far the most attractive piece of those before us. Beginning with a few bars of introduction, it starts off with a most graceful air, to which the second subject forms an excellent contrast. After a pause, in the original key of F major, a new theme, in the unexpected key of G flat, is introduced, boldly written in octaves. The modulations are afterwards well conducted to the re-appearance of the opening subject, which is given entire; and the piece concludes with a few supplementary bars, which include a portion of the introduction. This bright little composition has small pretension; but it can scarcely fail to please when the elegant passages which it contains can be interpreted with the refinement of touch which they demand. "*La Source*" opens with a rapid theme in 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> rhythm, which will require an elastic and brilliant finger to do it justice. The piece is, however, not difficult; and, independently of its melodious character (which is always an attraction to young performers) it is excellent as an exercise. "*La Méditation*" has a pleasing melody, well harmonised, which is afterwards varied, chiefly with rapidly repeated notes. It is short, and somewhat more trifling than those we have already noticed. "*La Brise du Soir*," is less to our taste than any of its companions. Not that we have any fault to find with it as a modern piece—"de salon"—but because the *arpeggio* passages, thrown off between the notes of the melody, have now become positively wearisome from ceaseless repetition. The piece may, however, become more in demand than any we have before mentioned; but the probability of this result will not deter us from entering our protest against it as the product of a worn-out school.

*Impromptu.* For the Pianoforte. By Siegfried Jacoby. (Op. 33).

A CLEVER Impromptu, written with the skill of a practised musician. The opening subject, in B minor, is quaint; and the change into the tonic major has an excellent effect: but there is a monotony about the piece which detracts much from its merit. The bit of placid melody, with the sudden transition of key, at page 5, is however an agreeable relief; and the enharmonic modulation by which the return to the key is effected shows that the composer has an intimate knowledge of the resources of harmony.

*Sketch, for the Pianoforte, in the form of a Minuet and Trio.* By E. H. Thorne.

THERE can be little doubt that the classical forms of writing are beginning to revive; for we daily see that many composers (having proved that they can throw off with the utmost freedom the accepted "music of the

period") prefer rather to lead than to follow the fashion, by producing compositions formed upon the models which have been bequeathed to us by those writers who have elevated the art to its present position. Here is a "Sketch," by a clever musician, of whom we have before made favourable mention, commendable alike for intention in the design, and for success in the execution. It commences with a brief Introduction, which leads to a Minuet, in which a bold and well marked subject is treated with much skill and effect; the left hand claiming its place in the movement as something more than a mere attendant upon the right. A good point is where, after the passage of thirds, a portion of the subject is alternated between the two hands. The Trio, in the subdominant, begins with a placid theme, accompanied by *staccato* chords in the right hand. A striking change of key afterwards occurs; and some rather wide extensions are written, which must be practised with care, even by those accustomed to the unmerciful stretches demanded by many of the modern "Fantasia" composers. This piece is by no means easy to play; but Mr. Thorne has proved that he does not write for those who only purchase music cut to the received pattern; and we therefore recommend his work to the few who can appreciate it.

*Allegro Scherzando.* For the Pianoforte. Composed by J. H. Deane.

Mr. Deane writes well for his instrument; but the trifling nature of his "Allegro Scherzando" does not warrant his extending the piece to eighteen pages. There is actually no cessation of the triplets from beginning to end; and the almost eternal four-quaver accompaniment in the left hand becomes excessively tiresome. The passages lie pleasantly under the hand, however; the harmonies are natural, and the changes of key generally well managed. The composition has almost the effect of a piece of extempore playing, where continuity is more thought of than contrast and proportion.

*Home is Home, however lowly.* Ballad. Written by Alaric A. Watts. Composed by R. Minton Taylor.

A GRACEFUL and melodious ballad, somewhat over harmonised, however, and, consequently, scarcely as attractive as it might have been had the composer been less ambitious. How difficult it is to be simple! Inexperienced students, for instance, cram as many notes into a score as they can get in, to make the harmony rich; and an experienced master cuts half of them out, as a gardener cuts down trees—to strengthen those that remain.

#### CHAPPELL AND Co.

*Messe Solennelle, a quatre voix, Soli et Chœurs.* Composée et Dédicée a Madame la Comtesse Pillet-Will, par G. Rossini.

It may be supposed that Mozart wrote his *Requiem*, Haydn his two great Masses in D minor and B flat, and Beethoven his two only Masses, each with the highest aim of an artist, that of producing the best which was possible to him, his own satisfaction being the sole standard to which he referred for judgment. The same may be believed of Rossini with regard to his *Stabat Mater*, and to the present work, which is now interesting large classes of music-lovers in all parts of the world. Neither was written in haste, as was the case with all his Italian operas; neither was addressed, as all of them were, to popular effect; neither was designed to elicit public applause, either by its own superficial prettiness, or by its accommodation to the peculiarities of some favourite singer; and neither was composed with a view to pecuniary profit, the last having been reserved until the author could not enjoy the fruit of his labour in the payment of the publisher, any more than in the admiration of the world. Here is fair ground for believing that the sacred compositions of Rossini, like the German masterpieces that have been named, were written to please the author, whose source of pleasure, whose measure of excellence, nay, in some sort,

whose personal character, may be traced in works produced under the circumstances of these. Whatever may be said of the subjective and objective in art, every work must, to some extent, reveal the personality and the individuality of the artist, and be an exposition or confession of how he thinks and feels differently from other men; and all the more so when, as with the *Stabat* and the Mass of Rossini, the work is wrought at leisure and with unforced inclination. To ignore, then, all the current stories of the habits of this fortunate musician during his forty years of retirement, and to interpret the nature of Rossini by the expression of it set forth in these voluntary confessions, one may fancy him to have been an applause-seeking voluptuary, who retained to the last the sensual love of all the sweetness of his native south, but who coveted esteem for erudition which he did not possess, which would have been irksome to him to acquire, and which, as much in itself as in its results, was uncongenial to his taste and to his feeling. There have long been perceived, in the *Stabat*, the characteristics which invite this interpretation: the always prevalent Italian style of melody, not frittered away in frivolous flourishes as in many of the most serious situations of the author's operas, but true Italian still, as purified by Bellini of its ornamental redundancy, and as dignified by Donizetti, and still more by Verdi, with masculine vigour; the tendency to chromatic harmony of that character which is picked out upon a key-board by any one who fancies himself endowed with a natural gift of preluding, the character in which frequently two notes are retained, while two others proceed by a semitone, the one up and the other down; the inclination to violent change of key, often enharmonic, at the cost of simpler and, it must be owned, more natural modulation; the employment of the extreme of orchestral resources on all occasions, whether appropriate or otherwise to the expressional requirements of the text; and, most conspicuously, the pretence of counterbalancing these extravagances by the assumption of scholarship, as exemplified in the final chorus of the *Stabat*, which more signally displays the author's want of contrapuntal power than any abstinence from fugal attempt would ever have led one to suspect in him. What is known of the *Stabat* may be looked for in the Mass. The latter was, even more than the former, a work of love, since, so far as we hear, it was wholly self-imposed; there was not the request of a high ecclesiastical dignity to exact it; and the characteristics of the *Stabat* are throughout more lovingly leant upon in the later production.

Here, then, we have a second sacred composition, to speak of the text, for the theatre and the concert-room.—a second secular composition, to speak of the music, for the Roman Church,—the work of the many years' most popular composer in Europe, who died to art in 1828, who died to the world in 1868, and who occupied the long period he passed in the purgatory of private life, with the tardy production of two large contributions to a class of music in which he had previously had no practice, for the good of his reputation, let us hope, and the welfare of his soul. Whoever likes the *Stabat Mater* of Rossini will love his Mass. Singers especially will delight in it, for, generally, it evinces strongly the capability in which his country excels, and in which Rossini was excellent among his countrymen,—the capability of writing for the voice so as to produce the best effects by the easiest means, and to make the act of singing his music a real pleasure to the vocalist. Among audiences, they who make the boarding-school distinction between singing and music, loving sound for its physical beauty rather than for its intellectual influence,—for its effect upon the senses more than for its embodiment of sense, will be enraptured with this composition, which is from end to end a course of vocalisation—pure singing for the sake of vocal display; devoid entirely of the encumbrance of declamation and expression; interrupted only with such demonstrations of supposed learning as will afford convenient moments of repose to the hearers, who may talk during which of the exquisite performance of the last solo